

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 247069

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HERewith FULL TEXT JAMES RESTON COLUMN NYTIMES -
DECEMBER 19, 1973:

ONE CLEAR LESSON OF THIS EXTRAORDINARY YEAR IS THAT
STRONG NATIONS AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS WITHIN NATIONS HAVE
MORE POWER THAN THEY DARE USE, BUT SOME PEOPLE STILL HAVEN'
LEARNED THE LESSON.

IT IS PLAIN FOR ALL TO READ:

THE UNITED STATES OBVIOUSLY HAD THE POWER TO DESTROY
NORTH VIETNAM, BUT PREFERRED TO COMPROMISE RATHER THAN
FACE THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE SLAUGHTER.

THE SOVIET UNION CLEARLY HAD MISSILES WHICH THE NORTH
VIETNAMESE COULD HAVE USED TO BLOW EVERY AMERICAN AIRCRAFT
CARRIER OUT OF THE SOUTH CHINA SEA ALONG THE VIETNAM
COAST, BUT LIKE THE UNITED STATES; MOSCOW LIMITED ITS
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PAGE 02 STATE 247069

POWER.

IN THE MIDDLE EAST, THE ISRAELIS HAD THE TANKS AND AIRCRAFT TO DESTROY DAMASCUS AND EVEN CAIRO, AND AGAIN THE RUSSIANS COULD HAVE GIVEN EGYPT MISSILES THAT COULD HAVE WIPED OUT TEL AVIV OR EVEN JERUSALEM BUT EVERYBODY HAD ENOUGH COMMON SENSE TO HOLD BACK.

HERE IN WASHINGTON, THE NIXON ADMINISTRATION IS IN TERRIBLE TROUBLE PRECISELY BECAUSE IT DIDN'T LIMIT ITS POWER IN THE POLITICAL WARS OF 1972, BUT RESORTED TO BURGLARY, ESPIONAGE, SABOTAGE, FORGERY, EXTORTION AND PERJURY TO ACHIEVE ITS POLITICAL ENDS AND THEN COVER UP.

EVEN SO, THE LEADERS OF THE ARAB WORLD, WHICH INVENTED PHILOSOPHY, SEEM TO HAVE MISSED THE PHILOSOPHIC POINT. THEY HAVE COME LATE INTO THE WORLD OF POWER POLITICS AND NOW THINK THEY CAN USE THE POWER OF OIL TO COMPEL THE BIG INDUSTRIAL NATIONS, WHO NEED THEIR OIL, TO LEAN ON ISRAEL.

IT IS A BOLD TACTIC. IT AMOUNTS TO SAYING THAT THE OIL-PRODUCING STATES OF THE MIDDLE EAST CAN THREATEN THE INDUSTRIAL NATIONS OF THE WORLD WITH UNEMPLOYMENT AND EVEN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHAOS UNLESS THEY SUPPORT THE ARAB CAUSE AGAINST ISRAEL. BRITAIN IS ALREADY ON A THREE-DAY WORK WEEK, JAPAN IS IN DEEP INDUSTRIAL TROUBLE, EUROPE IS DIVIDED, AND THE UNITED STATES IS CHANGING ITS WHOLE WAY OF LIFE BECAUSE OF THE OIL SHORTAGE--BUT NEVER MIND, THIS WILL MAKE THEM ALL HELP THE ARABS AGAINST ISRAEL.

SO FAR THE ARAB STRATEGY HAS WORKED. INDUSTRIAL WESTERN EUROPE AND JAPAN HAVE SIDED WITH THE ARAB STATES, AND EVEN SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER HAS BEEN URGING THE ISRAELIS TO WITHDRAW ROUGHLY TO THE BORDERS THEY HELD BEFORE THE 1967 WAR.

BUT MR. KISSINGER IS ALSO PLEADING WITH THE LEADERS OF THE ARAB NATIONS NOT TO PRESS THEIR ADVANTAGE TOO FAR, TO LIMIT THEIR POWER, AS THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION DID IN VIETNAM, AND WORK IN THE GENEVA PEACE CONFERENCE FOR COMPROMISE. MEANWHILE HE IS URGING THE ISRAELIS TO WITHDRAW FROM THE TERRITORIES THEY CONQUERED IN THE 1967 WAR, AND RELY ON THE UNITED STATES TO GUARANTEE RECOGNIZED AND SECURE ISRAELI BORDERS.

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 247069

NO AMERICAN SECRETARY OF STATE IN THIS CENTURY HAS HAD A MORE DIFFICULT ASSIGNMENT. HE IS ASKING ISRAEL TO

MAKE CONCESSIONS FOR PEACE SHE HAS NEVER BEEN WILLING TO MAKE IN THE PAST, AND ASKING THE ARAB NATIONS TO LIFT THEIR OIL BOYCOTT AND GIVE THE GENEVA PEACE CONFERENCE

A CHANCE.

THE ARAB NATIONS, HOWEVER, ARE STILL COUNTING ON POWER. THEY ARE OFFERING A DEAL TO THE UNITED STATES: FORCE ISRAEL TO WITHDRAW TO THE PRE-1967 BORDERS AND GUARANTEE THEIR WITHDRAWAL, AND THEN WE WILL GIVE YOU OIL. OTHERWISE IF NO WITHDRAWAL OR GUARANTEES OF WITHDRAWAL, NO OIL.

WHAT IS VERY OOD ABOUT THIS IS NOT ONLY THAT THE ARAB STATES HAVE NOT LEARNED THE LESSON OF LIMITING THEIR POWER, BUT THAT THEY HAVE WON THEIR MAIN BATTLE AND DON'T SEEM TO KNOW IT. BY WITHHOLDING OIL, THEY HAVE COMPELLED THE UNITED STATES, EUROPE AND JAPAN TO INSIST ON THE WITHDRAWAL OF ISRAEL FROM TERRITORY CAPTURED IN THE 1967 WAR. THIS HAS ALWAYS BEEN WASHINGTON'S POLICY--TO SUPPORT U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 242--AND THIS IS WHAT MR. KISSINGER IS STILL ADVOCATING.

HE HAS ASKED THE ARAB LEADERS TO DO A VERY SIMPLE THING: TO LIFT THE OIL EMBARGO WHEN THEY GO TO GENEVA, NOT TO ASK THE UNITED STATES TO NEGOTIATE UNDER DURESS, IN PRACTICAL TERMS, THIS IS NOT A MAJOR SUGGESTION. EVEN IF THE ARABS AGREE TO LIFT THE EMBARGO, IT WOULD TAKE WEEKS, AND MAYBE EVEN MONTHS TO GET THE OIL FLOWING AGAIN AT NORMAL LEVELS.

BUT THE ARABS ARE MAKING IT VERY HARD. SYRIA IS REFUSING TO GO TO THE GENEVA PEACE CONFERENCE. PRESIDENT
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 247069

SADAT OF EGYPT IS SAYING HE WON'T NEGOTIATE DIRECTLY WITH THE ISRAELIS. THE PALESTINIANS ARE SHOOTING UP AMERICAN PLANES AND MURDERING CIVILIANS TO CALL ATTENTION TO THEIR GRIEVANCES. IN SUM, THEY ARE RELYING ON POWER, VIOLENCE AND EVEN BLACKMAIL TO INFLUENCE THE MAJOR POWERS AND THE GENEVA PEACE CONFERENCE.

MAYBER THESE POWER TACTICS WILL WORK, BUT THAT IS NOT THE WAY THINGS HAVE GONE IN RECENT YEARS. THE LESSON IS THAT POWER CAN'T BE PUSHED TOO FAR, EITHER IN VIETNAM, BERLIN, OR WATERGATE, BUT THAT IT HAS TO BE CONTROLLED AND LIMITED SO THAT COMPROMISES AND ACCOMMODATIONS CAN BE REACHED. UNFORTUNATELY, NEITHER THE ISRAELIS NOR THE ARABS SEEM TO HAVE ACCEPTED THAT LESSON IN THE MIDDLE

EAST. (END TEXT) RUSH

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